

Ec-Sense



**The Allergy and Environmental Health
Association of Canada
Association Allergies Santé et Environnement
du Canada
Ottawa**



Winter 1992/93

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Thank you to those members who have renewed their memberships. We ask those of you who, for one good reason or another, have overlooked renewing their membership, to do so in the very near future. Send \$25 to AEHA Ottawa Membership Renewal, P.O. Box 33023, Nepean, Ontario K2C 3Y9.

IF YOUR MAILING LABEL INDICATES AN EXPIRY DATE PRIOR TO 9302 , IT'S TIME TO RENEW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1993

For those of you who don't know, Chris Brown, Ottawa Branch President, found employment in James Bay last Spring. Once again, we are in need of a President. Someone in relatively good health who:

- * has enthusiasm for the environmental health issue or would like to learn more about it;
- * is convinced of the impact of the environment on our health;
- * is dedicated and hard working;
- * would like to apply their leadership skills.

Do you know anyone, family or friends, who might be interested in the Presidency? Maybe you yourself have regained your health and care enough about AEHA to volunteer.

Other opportunities available to you are:

Workshop co-ordinator
Public Awareness Co-ordinator
Social Affairs Convenor
Editors for the Newsletter
Newsletter Distributor
Telephone Committee Co-ordinator
Library Assistants.

If you can help fill any of these positions, please let our nominating committee know today: Jim McCulloch (726-1136), Elizabeth Stutt (825-8388), or Kathy Dickenson (838-3106).

Some of our current Board Members would also like a change in their responsibilities so if you would be more interested in a currently held position,

call Jim because we can always juggle things around.

AEHA is a support group. We meet as a Board once a month and as members once a month. Some of the jobs have weekly responsibilities, others monthly. By getting involved, you will take charge of your health and give yourself a sense of control over your illness.

When considering whether you have the stamina to make a contribution, remember all of us are trying to achieve more wellness, we do the best we can. One of the best ways to regain your health is to gain information by volunteering to be a Board member.

We sometimes hear members say their health will not permit them to get involved. But we also hear they appreciate the newsletter, getting together to educate themselves and for support, having access to the libraries and meat freezer, knowing their illness is recognized and that others are also trying to manage their sensitivities.

By making any contribution, you will ensure the continuation of these services in the Ottawa area.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Trevor Lyons, Dentist and Microbiologist will give a presentation on how oral infections may impact your health.

See you there!

INDOOR AIR

Ontario Environment Ministry released indoor air study on Sept 1/92 which says that indoor air far worse than outdoor pollution. Smoking, household products (using plastic foams), automobile exhaust and paint are source of more than 80 per cent exposure to benzene. Air fresheners, clothes from dry cleaners, aerosol sprays, upholstery, insulation and synthetic carpets contain toluene, vinyl chloride and naphthalene which were 2 to 5 times more concentrated in people's homes than they were outside. Vehicle exhaust and gasoline fumes inside cars, found at higher levels than in the outside air. Formaldehyde (released by textiles, plastic foam and resin in wood) was 11 times higher in homes than outdoors. In the future more attention will be paid to monitoring toxic air pollutants than to the less dangerous "traditional pollutants such as carbon monoxide and gases that cause acid rain. (Ottawa Citizen, Sept 2/92).

ASTHMA

The incidence of asthma has been growing for two decades, with many specialists blaming the spread of fitted carpets and "tight" houses built to conserve energy and eliminate leaks. House dust mites have been identified as one of the chief causes of the asthma epidemic.

Dr. Korsgaard, Danish re-

searcher, said that studies showed that fitted carpets and the frequency of vacuum cleaning did not affect mites. The sole factor was high humidity. The "threshold" relative humidity level, above which the risk from mites increases, is 45 per cent. A decade ago two-thirds of houses in Denmark were below this level. Now, because of better insulation standards, four-fifths are above it.

Cold dry air helps asthma more than medicine. Better ventilation cut drug usage by 60 per cent. (The Ottawa Citizen, July 10, 1992)

SIDS & NURSERY

Architect, David Pearson, wonders if there's a link between Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and a newly decorated nursery. New crib, new mattress, new paint, new wallpaper, new carpet, new stuffed toys could endanger a baby.

Pearson, an authority on sick-building syndrome, believes people are exposed in their homes to the hidden effects of all kinds of gases and vapors, from synthetic materials made from petrochemicals, to heavy metals and pesticides in water and food.

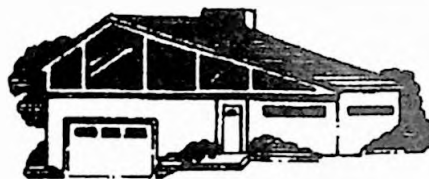
He feels that much can be done to improve even the sickest building.

- * move in plants
- * install windows that open
- * put in some skylights
- * replace products over time with healthier choices.

Specially designed furniture is available for environmentally sensitive people. A carpenter, Rusty Sage, in Sooke, B.C., almost exclusively uses pegs, or mortise and tenon joints to fasten furniture instead of glues. Beds and tables are important for families with young children who might lick the surfaces. He avoids finishes with petroleum distillates in them.

Pearson says large office buildings are usually in near-desert conditions - very dry and close to 80 degrees. The air quality is contaminated by VDT's, computers, and office equipment.

Encouraging Sign - University of British Columbia's School of Architecture is working on a major project to develop methods for environmental auditing of buildings and building materials. (The Ottawa Citizen, D2, January 25, 1992.)



AIR QUALITY KNOWLEDGE TEST

GIVES FOLLOWING RESULTS

We have to be more concerned about inside air contamination than we did 40 years ago. More than 60,000 chemicals are used commercially today that had not been invented 40 years ago.

The ban on urea formaldehyde foam insulation (UFFI) did not eliminate all the formaldehyde inside our homes. It is also found in glues that are used in furniture, cupboards, carpeting, particle board, plywood and wood preservatives. The glue breaks down over time, releasing small amounts of formaldehyde gas.

Indoor air is contaminated by many things that cannot be removed by vacuuming. Furnace humidifiers can hold pools of stagnant water that breed bacteria. Synthetic materials often discharge chemicals. Homeowners susceptible to allergies may have problems with new drapes, floor coverings and furnishings.

One of the hazards of contaminated air is that it can affect our health without our even realizing it.

Opening windows will clean out stale air. During winter, it will also clean out your budget for heating fuels. (The Ottawa Sunday Sun, H5, Sept. 6, 1992.)

SICK BUILDING

Place de Ville called "sick building". Transport Canada employee Marcy Holyk suffers from allergic reactions - headaches, aching bones and muscles, and flu-like symptoms - that she blames on bad air in Place de Ville.

Preliminary study from Health and Welfare says 1600 trays collecting drips from the ventilation system have never been changed in 21 years - possibly never even been cleaned. They were caked with lime and dust and could be a breeding ground for fungus.

Three library staff are seriously ill with allergies. Holyk said she can't eat wheat, dairy products, tomatoes or some vegetables. Other workers are allergic to dust and moulds, and some suffer respiratory problems such as tightness in the chest.

Department spokesman Rene Mercier said preliminary results don't have enough information to show whether the fungus affects people's health. (The Ottawa Citizen, A2, Thurs. Sept. 10, 1992.)



Remember our AGM on February 18, 1993. Dr. Trevor Lyons will speak to us on how oral infections may impact on your health. See p. 10.

EASY STEPS FOR CLEAN AIR

1. Reduce or eliminate the source of contamination. Store household chemicals and paint outside and dispose of unneeded chemical containers. Paint particle board with low-permeability paint to prevent formaldehyde gas from escaping. Let firewood dry outside. Wet wood releases moisture into the air.

2. Install a central exhaust system or individual fans at or near the sources of contamination. Washrooms, laundry rooms, kitchens and cabinets that store chemical products

are ideal places for fans.

3. Install a mechanical ventilation system to dilute and remove contaminated air.

4. Filter the air. Furnace filters sift out particles and airborne bacteria. Replace filters at least once a year.

5. Maintain your home. Keep bacteria away by cleaning your furnace filter and furnace humidifier. Available from CMHC "How To Improve The Quality of Air in Your Home"

HUMIDIFIERS

Humidifiers are harmful to the health of those with allergies.

Instead of the added moisture in the air lubricating and providing relief to those with asthma and chronic rhinitis, humidifiers create allergens: house dust mites and mould. House dust mites love humidity. If the humidity is above 50% they breed, if below 50% (especially in the mattress where they live), they do not breed.

Most humidifiers become heavily contaminated with mould which is then distributed throughout the room in the water vapour. If humidity levels are too high, mould and mildew grows on items in the room.

With the sealed winter environment in most Canadian homes, the moisture created through the normal home activities such as showers, baths, cooking and doing laundry provides adequate humidity. (Allergy Asthma Quarterly, Vol 28, Autumn '92, p.8)

Mr. Mother Earth's Tips

Indoor toxins are made up of formaldehyde, benzene, and trichloroethylene. 2 plants for every 100 sq. ft. will clear air up to 80 - 90%.

To remove formaldehyde: azalea, aloe vera, philodendron

To remove benzene: Chrysanthemum, corn plant.

To remove tee (trichloroethylene): english ivy, pothos, dracena.

CARPETS

Forty white mice expired when exposed to air that had been blown over ordinary carpeting. Ten years ago, urea-formaldehyde was removed from carpets hoping to calm fears of toxic emissions. Health and Welfare advises to play it safe when installing new carpeting. "The off-gassing of new carpeting can be strong and can affect some people. If it's possible the house should be vacated for a few days leaving the windows open."

An environmental medical doctor in Mississauga, Ont., Dr. Jozef Krop, said "There are substances in rugs that are making people sick. It is a dirty and unhygienic form of floor covering. Old carpeting has a buildup of bacteria and fungus mixed with chemical-based cleaners that spews nasty fumes into the air. And new carpeting sends out a noxious mix of petrochemicals known as off-gassing.

According to Sheldon Elman, a family practitioner and president of Eco Research-Medisys, all members of a Montreal family, had an allergic reaction to the dye in the rug and once all contact with the rug was avoided the rashes and itchiness disappeared. What to do if you suspect your carpet:

. Consult an allergist if you feel you have developed a carpet-sensitivity.

. If you feel better after leaving the house, there is a strong possibility emissions are coming from the carpet. Dr. Commandeur, specialist in environmental health with the Montreal community health department, suggests keeping the humidity down as moisture will breed fungus in the carpeting.

. Robert Thibodeau, Member of the Quebec Environmental Task Force, recommends using plants to absorb gas emissions from carpets. A one 8-inch potted plant will clean up a space with a floor area of 100 square feet. Best plants are mother-in-law's tongue, chrysanthemum, spider plant, azalea, diffenbachia, philodendron, corn plant and bamboo palm.

. Eco Research-Medisys is a lab and medical clinic specializing in health problems. Charges range from \$40 - \$110 an hour. Lab 697-3273, medical clinic 845-1211. (Montreal)

. Bruce Small, specialist on indoor air pollution recommends sealing a piece of suspected carpet in a jar and let the sun warm it for a few hours. Open the jar and sniff the contents and observe your reaction. For more information: Sunnyhill Research Centre, R.R. 1, Goodwood, Ont L0C 1A0 (416) 649-1356. (The Gazette Montreal, Nov.5/92, D2)

We Get Letters

I would like to point out that anyone reacting to MSG (Monosodium Glutamate) will probably also be affected by HVP (Hydrolysed Vegetable/Plant/Soy Protein, Autolysed Yeast, sodium caseinate and probably meta-bisulphites in wine. My reactions are not only headaches but more frighteningly atrial fibrillation and cardiac arrhythmias. It took many years of yo-yo-ing in and out of hospital emergency rooms and intensive care units to discover what was causing the problem - keeping a diary of what I'd eaten after attacks helped.

My heart also reacts to cigarette smoke and exhaust fumes so there are many places my husband and I can't go to because of my reactions. There are no tests for these chemicals and therefore the problem is not considered to be an allergy even though I have never been intolerant of them.

I use a charcoal type mask if I get into an environment where there has been a lot of cigarette smoke or exhaust fumes. We have bought a scuba tank for the car so that I can have clean air to breathe in bad exhaust situations. (N.B) a doctor's medical note is needed to get the tank recharged by air at a store that sells scuba goods. I was told that a fire station would be able to recharge the tank but I have never used this source. A "Help I Have An Allergy" card with the problem things typed on the back from the Allergy & Asthma Association accompanied by a verbal message of how my heart reacts if I get foods with these chemicals in them - makes the people much more careful.

Following is a list of things MSG, etc. can be found in. If anyone is aware of other things these chemicals are in, please let me know what they are.

Joyce Roberts (828-4066)

Your Experiences could help other members! Send them to Eco-Sense P.O. Box 33023, Nepean, Ontario K2C 3Y9.



MSG, HVP (or plant or soy), Autolysed Yeast, Sodium Caseinate, Wine - Metabisulphites

1. Most cans of soup or powdered soups served in restaurants.
2. Some sauces - soy, worcestershire, oyster, spaghetti.
3. Bouillon - liquid, powder, cubes (n.b. can be in packages that say no MSG).
4. Anything pre-breaded or battered eg. fish, chicken.
5. Seasoned salt - flavourings, seasoning.
6. Packaged - diet foods, pizzas, pot pies, tortieres.
7. Most sausage meats and sausage rolls.
8. fancy crackers.
9. Party dips - potato chips and other junk foods.
10. Kentucky fried chicken - one of the secret ingredients!
11. Packaged powdered soups eg. Lipton's Onion Soup or Cup O'Soup.
12. Many delicatessen meats - watch out for this in restaurants and at parties. eg. club sandwiches.
13. Canned soups in casseroles (pot luck meals & parties).
14. Packaged bread crumbs and croutons.
15. Many foods at fast food outlets and most restaurants.
16. Chinese & Italian restaurants (in sauces).
17. Difficulties in restaurants where the food was prepared in the morning and the chefs left for the day. Many hospital foods are full of chemicals - prepared on the outside to be heated before serving.
18. Nutri/system packaged foods.
19. Wine added to casseroles, vegetable salads (eg. mushroom) and fruit salads.
20. Be on guard at pot luck meals where some of the above ingredients can be used - also buffets.

Fragrance Warning

After a recent trip to a body repair shop, our car came back smelling very strongly of perfume; it still makes me sick after several days' airing. A call to the shop revealed that the car was deliberately sprayed with a "new car scent" to cover the paint odor. I explained my problem to the manager, and he decided to stop using the product! So it's worthwhile speaking out. Also, if you are having any work done on your car, it's a good idea to emphasize that no such product should be used.

Barb Bellin

Publisher's Note: If your car dealer is computerized, have them put your chemical sensitivities on your computer file.

SICK HOSPITAL, SICK DOCTOR

'Sick building' problems began at the Camp Hill Medical Centre in Halifax. Roy Fox has been on leave from his job as head of geriatric medicine since last year. Fox is one of the first senior male physicians with impeccable credentials to criticize the medical establishment for its approach to his medical condition -multiple chemical sensitivities with chronic fatigue. Many patients are angered when doctors view their complaints sceptically, tell them they are imaginary and refer them to psychiatrists.

Camp Hill epitomizes the sick-building concept. According to Dr. Rosemary Marchant, an air quality consultant hired by Camp Hill, building our buildings airtight in order to save energy has made it so people live in plastic bags that we push air into and out of. Many hospitals have indoor air quality problems but Camp Hill is unique as it has been open about its problem.

Since 1989, on any given day about 100 of the 1200 employees in affected buildings call in sick - twice the normal absentee rate. Their mysterious symptoms include everything from eye irritation, fatigue and dizziness to nausea, memory loss and skin rashes. Some have extreme allergies to foods, indoor and outdoor air pollution, and to synthetic fabrics in everyday items. Estimates range as high as 600 people to be affected. Three of the four buildings have been plagued by the environmental problems. Possible causes identified include caustic soda being blown from an exhaust fan into a faulty air intake, acid being poured into an air intake, formaldehyde and phenol being present in the air, and asbestos insulation being present on heating ducts. The hospital has tried to eliminate irritants by restricting the use of some materials, such as glues used in occupational therapy. Air circulation systems have been altered. A fume hood and exhaust was installed in an operating room. Staff members appear to have been affected the most.

Fox has not been able to return to work as he reacts within seconds of walking into the hospital

even after all the changes. He feels he needs a clean environment. His problems began in 1987 when the Geriatric Division moved into second floor offices above the cafeteria of the Veteran's Memorial building. Smoke and exhaust fumes and kitchen smells contaminated his offices. It took years for Fox to exhibit symptoms. He found himself tired at the end of the day and had difficulty concentrating and focusing and went home exhausted. In 1990 he developed a painful rash, mostly on his scalp. Then intestinal problems, from diarrhea to constipation, appeared and he began to feel even more fatigued. When at the centre his brain was fogged and he had word-finding problems as he spoke. He then suffered an acute reaction to developing fluid. He felt nauseated, had difficulty walking a straight line and was dizzy.

Fox has had to purge his wardrobe of synthetics and replace them with natural fibre items, change some furnishings in his house and buy air-filtration systems to clean the air in his house and car. Although he had never been allergic, he now reacts to 23 of 29 tested foods. When exposed to substances like synthetic clothing, perfume and ordinary foods he becomes dizzy, clumsy and numb. He begins to feel strange hot and cold sensations in his legs and to experience renewed gastrointestinal problems.

He is responding to vitamin and mineral therapy. He is most distressed by what orthodox medicine has to offer in the way of treating this condition. Alternate treatments do not meet the criteria demanded by the medical profession. He is considering research and a possible book on environmental illness. (Canadian Medical Association Journal 1992; 146 (11))

Ottawa Annual General Meeting

February 18, 1993

ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE CLINIC

The Nova Scotia Environmental Medicine Clinic is a pilot project sponsored by the Nova Scotia government. The province spends \$200,000 annually to bring Dr. Jerry Ross and two Dallas-based nurses to Victoria General Hospital's Bethune Building in Halifax six times a year. Nova Scotia's officials "don't use the term environmental hypersensitivities, but do acknowledge that these individuals are ill". The provincial chapter of AEHA is already lobbying to keep the clinic open and expand its services, and is also asking the federal government to provide support.

Ross, a 1974 graduate of Dalhousie University's medical school, practised as a family physician in New Minas until 1986, when he learned the water supply had been contaminated with dry cleaning fluid in 1981. He believes that exposure to it caused him to develop multiple sensitivities to the fluid, to other chemicals and to many foods. The province paid the cost of his 2-year training program at the Environmental Health Centre in Dallas, Texas and in London, England.

In the Nova Scotia clinic, he takes a history and performs a physical examination. The patient then undergoes intradermal testing to determine the extent of reactions to foods and chemicals; blood tests are also ordered to determine "the patient's nutritional status or level of chemical contamination".

Ross feels environmental sensitivities are now more common because the environment is increasingly polluted and new synthetic chemicals have been developed. As well, energy-conservation efforts mean more people are working in air-tight environments. "Indoor air pollution is often 10 to 100 times worse than outdoor air pollution," he stated. Substances that trigger environmental reactions range from household cleaning products and gases

from synthetic items like foam chair cushions to natural pollens associated with common allergies. He said symptoms of chemical sensitivity vary among patients and over time, but include "fatigue, headache, mental confusion, joint pains, muscle aches, nausea and depression. In susceptible individuals, these symptoms and others may be triggered by exposure to commonly encountered substances in everyday settings."

Ross's prescribed basic treatment for his patients is clean, filtered air, clean water that is bottled in glass and clean, organically grown food. Often, a rotary diet is prescribed in which the same food is not eaten more than once every 4 days. Patients are advised about a nutritionally balanced diet that provides vitamins, minerals, amino acids and essential fatty acids; in many cases supplements are given, often intravenously. There is a 30-month waiting list for an appointment at Dr. Jerry Ross's clinic. Sept 15, 1992 Can Med Association J 1992; 147(6)



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and natural foods

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- supplements and vitamins
- Bach flower remedies
- Champion & Nutrimax juicers
- non-animal tested cosmetics

Heures d'affaires

LUN - VEN	9 h à 21 h
SAM	9 h à 21 h
DIM	10 h à 17 h

Business Hours

MON - FRI	9 am. - 9 pm.
SAT	9 am. - 9 pm.
SUN	10 am. - 5 pm.

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Eco-Sense

BRANCH NEWS

Thanks to Ross and Eva Hamilton for bringing their organic chicken and goose for us to sample at our Christmas pot luck. Members present were treated to a delicious taste and thankful for the opportunity. The Hamiltons sell rabbits (\$2.95/lb), chickens (\$1.95/lb) and geese (\$2.95/lb) at their farm, R.R. #4, Shawville, Quebec J0X 2Y0 (819) 647-3268. The geese are available now, rabbits anytime of the year, but chickens must be ordered before April 1st for fall 1993 delivery. Thanks to Stephane Lecouffe for inviting Ross and Eva to our dinner. ■

Deer meet is once again available through our wild game freezer. Call Estelle Drolet to reserve (825-4439). ■

Thanks to Eileen Carter for donating an "Air Conditioning Engineer" (1987 model) air cleaner to our branch. It is twice as large as our other model and can be rented through Barb Bellin (238-2403). ■

Workshop opportunities! M.E.S.H. has invited us to participate in some of their workshops. Topics include Working at Home for Civil Servants, Buying Fish, Alternate Grains and others. For more information and to register call Grace between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. (725-9477). ■

Leslirac Rotor is participating in a steering committee for National Access Awareness Week (May 31- June 6). Her focus is to ensure that environmental sensitivities are included along with other invisible disabilities. ■

For our members who have a life & death allergy to any foods and are not paid members of AIA: Estelle Drolet (825-4439), a current AIA member, is willing to call our members to advise them of any food warnings or changes in prepared foods given by Health and Welfare. ■

FOR SALE

Air Cleaner, Allermed, attractive stainless steel casing, 27"x25"x12", outstanding quality for particles and chemicals, carbon and hepa filters, effectively covers 400 sq ft, vacuum attachment for venting computers, or reading boxes, etc. Selling for 1/2 retail price, \$350. Call Nancy at 729-4995.

Important Publisher's Note

Thanks to our members who have renewed their membership/subscription fees. We appreciate your support. Please remember to renew or tell new members to join through the Ottawa Branch - P.O. Box 33023, Nepean, Ontario K2C 3Y9. Your application will be processed more quickly and we will know immediately to put you on our Eco-Sense mailing list.

In the past, we kept members on the Eco-Sense mailing list even though their date had expired. The assumption was that when you renewed you would realize that you would be paying for past issues that you had received. Unfortunately not all members agree to do this and insist that their new expiry date be made effective the date they send in their renewal fee. Consequently, the organization is in arrears for Eco-Senses that were already mailed.

For financial reasons, we will have to discontinue our current practice. In the future, all unrenewed members will be deleted from the Eco-Sense mailing list when their subscription has expired. Please pay attention to the expiry date on your mailing label. When human resources are available, a reminder notice or membership renewal form will be included with your last Eco-Sense.

EVENTS**EVENTS****EVENTS****EVENTS****EVENTS****EVENTS**

PLEASE REFRAIN FROM WEARING SCENTED PRODUCTS TO OUR MEETINGS!

Thursday, February 18

7:30 p.m.

McNabb Community Centre
180 Percy St.

Dr. Trevor Lyons (Dentist and Microbiologist)

Environmental Sensitivities - Could it all be in your head?

Microbiological assessment of dental plaque can identify target organisms. The presentation will describe these organisms and how oral infections may impact your health.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, April 15

7:30 p.m.

McNabb Community Centre
180 Percy St.

Members Night

Your night to come out and ask questions. Meet other members and share information. A panel discussion can be arranged.

Thursday, May 20

7:30 p.m.

McNabb Community Centre
180 Percy St.

Dr. John Molot (Environmental Medicine)

Report on the American Academy of Environmental Medicine's Conference last October.

Have an idea for a meeting or workshop?

Drop us a line at Speaker Suggestions, PO Box 33023, Nepean, Ontario. K2C 3Y9

AIR CLEANERS - ARE THEY HELPFUL?

by Dr. Virginia Salares

An air cleaner is a device intended to purify the air. It may be installed centrally for the whole house or used as a stand-alone unit. The present discussion will deal with the latter.

Ionizers vs. Air Filters

There are three kinds of room air cleaners: ionizers, electrostatic precipitators and air filters. Ionizers generate charged particles, called negative ions, which attract air-borne contaminants. To be removed, the contaminants must have positive charges. Electrostatic precipitators remove pollutants by means of electrically charged plates, as in furnace-mounted electronic air cleaners. They are effective for particulates but not gaseous pollutants. Here are two things to watch out for: generation of ozone, a respiratory and central nervous system irritant, and high electromagnetic fields from some units. Air filters employ various filters in sequence to purify the air: a pre-filter to screen out coarse particles, adsorbent media to remove gaseous contaminants, and a higher efficiency particulate filter to remove the microscopic particles. The pre-filter is usually a washable metal screen. The fine particulate filter needs replacing periodically. The adsorbent media are contained in trays which can be emptied and refilled. There are two kinds of adsor-

bent media that are commonly used. These are activated charcoal and activated alumina (known as Purafil or Perma-sorb). They are sold in the form of pellets -spheres to maximize the surface area in contact with the air. Gases that are present in the air are captured by adsorption. Thus, charcoal grabs and holds the pollutants, but activated alumina in addition to simple adsorption can also break down some gases by oxidation. The adsorbent media have higher adsorption when new. As they become loaded with the contaminants, their effectiveness to remove gaseous contaminants decreases and when they become saturated will remove no more. Another process called desorption, i.e. the adsorbent releases what it has previously removed, becomes important. The media can release what it has previously removed.

Maintenance

It is obvious that the filter media have to be replaced before desorption takes over. In the case of charcoal, there is no indicator other than the freshness of the filtered air. Activated alumina, as purchased, is purple and turns brown when spent. One can cut a pellet and see if it is brown to the core. Activated charcoal and alumina are expensive. It is possible to re-activate charcoal, which some suppliers

in the U.S. encourage. New trays can be exchanged for the old. Most likely you will have to change the filters yourself - not a very pleasant chore; you may want someone else to do it. The refilling holes are small and consequently make the process cumbersome. A dust mask is needed while filling, and before re-installing the trays, vacuum to remove loose dusts.

Sensitivity to Filter Media

Responses to charcoal vary among individuals. Activated charcoal is commonly derived from coconut shells. Those who cannot tolerate coconut charcoal can try peat charcoal. If this is not tolerated, test activated alumina. A few are known to be intolerant of all of the filters, in which case, air filters would not be appropriate.

How to Select Air Filters

The materials the machine is made of should be inert and non-polluting. Obviously, a stainless steel housing is better than one made of plastic. Follow the path of the air and ensure that the materials the air passes through are in themselves not a source of pollutants. Check that the pre-filter and the fine particulate filter are acceptable to you. It is also important to check that there are adsorbent filters past the motor. The motor gets heated during operation and

becomes a source of odorous contaminants.

Will a Room Air Filter Work for You?

First, how large a space do you intend to clean? A unit sized for a room will not be capable of cleaning a whole house. Second, where are the pollutants coming from? Effectiveness of cleaning is reduced if pollutants are produced continuously, especially if they are produced faster than they are removed. This would be the case when there are people smoking in the room, there is an odorous carpet, or if pollutants are coming from other parts of the house.

Room air filters generate both heat and noise. It would not be helpful for pollen allergy in the warm months. The noise can also be disruptive to one's sleep. These drawbacks can be eliminated by installing filters centrally to clean the whole house instead of just one room. Part Two will deal with this subject.

AIR CLEANER SOURCES

AIR CLEANER SOURCES - Air ionizers and desktop style air ecologizers are unlikely to be really useful. The miniature ionizers and electrostatic air cleaners give off ozone which may cause reactions in some people. Air cleaners are likely to prove more suitable for environmentally sensitive persons. Remember to change the filters.

Allermed Corporation

631 J Place, Plano Texas 75074
(214) 422-4311

. also available through Smith's Pharmacy, 3463 Yonge St, Toronto, Ont. M4N 2N3 (416) 488-2600.

. Catalogue in AEHA library.

. Companion Aire-for travel, desk, etc. 12"x8"x7 1/2" \$269.95; Auto Aire-12 volt for car or van 10"x10"x8 1/2" \$279.95; Airstar 5C-Portable personal small room 9"x12"x16" \$499.95; Space Saver 400-large room 12"x25"x27" \$1080.00.

Air Conditioning Engineers

PO Box 616 Decatur, Illinois 62525
(217) 692-2812 or (217) 422-0311

. AEHA has a model for rent for members on a trial basis.

Tibbitts Clean Air Machine

P.O. Box 1016, Cobourg, ONT K9A 4W4
(416) 372-7082 or (416) 372-8853

. local contact: Richard Guenette at Mother Hubbard's Natural & Bulk Foods, 250 Greenbank Rd., Nepean, Ont. K2H 8X4 (820-3178)

. also available through Smith's Pharmacy, 3463 Yonge St, Toronto, Ont. M4N 2N3 (416) 488-2600. Catalogue in AEHA library.

. portable air cleaners suitable for a bedroom, automobile, and furnace-size available.

. AEHA has a small Tibbitts for rent for members on a trial basis.

. T 127 - car model 8"x12"x10 1/2" \$395.00; T 101-small room model 10"x16"x10 1/2" \$499.00; T 310-large room model 22"x16"x18" \$799.00; T 3 -new larger room model 24"x18"x18" \$899.00.

Walmar

24 Gurdwara Road
Nepean, Ontario K2E 8A1
(613) 225-9774 *get weekend*

. purafil, activated charcoal, filters for aircleaners . wholesale dealer in these products. You can contact Barb Bellin (238-2403) and she may be able to sell you smaller amounts.

SHARING INFORMATION

Some members have used Chem-Dry to clean their carpets. Carpets are cleaned with "The Natural" which is like giving your carpet a refreshing mineral water bath. It contains no soaps, detergents, surfactants, organic solvents, enzymes, optical brighteners, bleaches, phosphates, petroleum-based materials, thickeners, fragrances, artificial colors, preservatives, plastics or polymers. It does contain carbonated water & minerals & a hint of mint. They will gladly mix a small amount for you so you can test for tolerance. Remember to test it within 48 hours as it does not contain a preservative. Call James McManaman (228-1696). ■

100% cotton mattress covers at MAJER Imports on Greenbank (829-4207) are sold as "seconds". (Queen sells for \$23.95). There is a waiting list. Remember to wash in cold water to prevent shrinkage. ■

100% cotton mattress cover at Sears has polyester fibre fill - not cotton. ■

Available at Eaton's, Simply cotton sheets by Utica made from undyed, untreated unbleached cotton (packaged in a cotton bag). Standard Size set (2 cases) sells at \$49.95. ■

Oxfam-Canada's Bridgehead 1992-93 Catalogue offers many products which may be of use to our members - shaving kit, embroidered satchel, T-shirts, vests, Indian trousers, men's dressing gown (all 100% cotton). Catalogue now in AEHA Book library. Also available through the United Church. ■


Remarkable Rice Cake Recipes available through Parkdale Postal Station, P.O. Box 28030, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 6J8, 68 pages, \$8.95. ■

Valco Positioning System Pillow available at Nutrichem Pharmacy. It is available in different shapes, 100% cotton outer lining, filling: 100% buckwheat hulls; non-allergenic vegetable fiber;


dry sterilized no chemicals involved. ■

Organic honey from different flowers is available from Jeff Schultz (1-819-647-3665). ■

Organic maple syrup can be obtained from Vern Fairhead (1-819-647-5544) ■



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Face to Face

Under the auspices of the National Access Awareness Co-ordinating Committee, individuals with disabilities looking for employment are matched up with employers. The primary purpose of this Face to Face program, introduced as a pilot project in 1989 in Ottawa, is to sensitize employers to the needs of the disabled. There is an exchange of information/job shadowing between employer and employee which usually lasts for 1/2 to 1 day. There is no obligation to hire. It is strictly an exploration, but occasionally job opportunities do result. It is an opportunity for the employer to become familiar with the needs of a particular disability and for the employee to learn what skills and qualifications are expected for the job. For further information call Leslirae Rotor (830-7968) or Line 1000 (731-7620).

Nutri-Chem Pharmacy Ltd.
1303 Richmond Road
Ottawa, Ontario K2B 7Y4



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Kent MacLeod, B.Sc. Phm.
Pharmacist / Owner

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When you respond to information or advertisements in the Eco-sense, please remember to mention you are an AEHA member and saw the reference in this newsletter. Thanks.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL APPLIANCE OF THE NINETIES

A revolutionary and environmentally friendly home cleaning appliance! The 100GRADI STEAMATIC-2 system can be used to clean almost everything inside and outside your home, car and workplace. The most common applications would be: hardwood floors, ceramic tiles, carpets, linoleum, bathrooms, kitchens, ovens, stoves & fridges, all types of furniture and upholstery, glass, vertical blinds, walls & ceilings, doors, your cars interior & parts of the exterior. The possibilities are endless.

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(613) 565-4587 Bus/Fax: 565-7450

G.S.T. tip

Did you know that by obtaining a prescription (with the cooperation of your physician) for any typically purchased non-prescription product you can save the G.S.T. and the Provincial Sales Tax (when applicable).

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Medication Tips

Remember to tell your doctor or pharmacist:

1

The names of all prescription and non-prescription medicines you are taking.

2

The medicines to which you are allergic.

Get the answers you need. Ask your doctor or pharmacist:



The name of the medicine and its purpose



How and when to take it and for how long



What foods, drinks, other medicines or activities should be avoided while taking the medicine



What possible side effects can occur and what to do



Whether possible side effects could affect your driving performance



How to store the medicine

Prepared by the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association, the national professional association of pharmacists

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